

amph.  
Anthrop.  
Folk-lore.

FROM THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

SECOND SERIES—1896-97

VOLUME II

SECTION II

ENGLISH HISTORY, LITERATURE, ARCHÆOLOGY, ETC.

THE  
ANCIENT LITERATURE  
OF AMERICA

By JOHN CAMPBELL, LL.D.

FOR SALE BY

JOHN DURIE & SON, OTTAWA; THE COPP-CLARK CO., TORONTO  
BERNARD QUARITCH, LONDON, ENGLAND

1896

With the writer

Kind regards

Harvard, July 11, 1897

III.—*The Ancient Literature of America.*

By JOHN CAMPBELL, LL.D.

(Read May 20, 1896.)

The anthropologist or student of man, may investigate him as he would any other object of natural history, classifying him with tail-less apes and erect bears, noting the form of his skull, the angle of his face, the colour of his skin, and the texture of his hair. To such a biologist man is an animal and nothing more. Another enters the field of sociology, viewing the intelligent animal in his relations with his fellows and with nature at large. Here a thousand interesting features present themselves, in domestic and tribal organization, marriage and funeral ceremonies, rites and superstitions, manners and customs, house building, domestication of animals, the chase and war, husbandry, the manufacture of canoes, pottery, and implements of many kinds. A third, calling himself a philologist, discovers that the animal talks, although Mr. Garner, who has been making special studies in Africa, in his recent book called "*The Speech of Monkeys*," contends that language is not peculiar to human beings. There is one way of communicating thought which uncivilized man shares with the brute, and this has been very fully illustrated by the late Colonel Garrick Mallery in his treatise on Sign and Gesture Language. Mr. Garner has perhaps succeeded in detecting something approaching to articulation in the cries of apes, but, until he can formulate a monkey grammar, the soul of speech will be wanting in his system. Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* spoke prose without knowing it, and wild tribes of men are ignorantly guilty of grammar, and, what is more strange, of good grammar. An English child is reported as answering an intimation that her mother wanted her, with the words, "Her aint callin' me ; us don't belong to she," in spite of the board schools. Such a thing would be next to impossible in the case of an American Indian child, who unconsciously uses most correct speech, and in narration employs a style elevated and ornate. The occurrence of ungrammatical sentences in the language of a native almost invariably marks him as a foreigner who has acquired it late in life.

In conversation with the grammatical Indian, the philologist discovers that, unlike the knife-grinder who said,

"Story, God bless you, I have none to tell,"

he has a large collection of stories. Some of these are beautiful, as well in their spirit as in their rhetorical and poetical forms ; but a great many are not. I do not know the precise number of volumes of Indian

Folk-Lore that have been published, but there must be at least a hundred, and one of the best of them is *Tales of the Micmaes* by that distinguished Canadian scholar and missionary, Dr. Silas Tertius Rand. I have said that many of the Indian stories are not beautiful; they are weird, unchristian, oftentimes immoral, glorifications of brute force and low cunning, regardless of consequences. These characteristics are not peculiarly American. Read Lady Charlotte Guest's "*Welsh Mabinogion*," Campbell's "*Tales of the West Highlands*," Fergusson's "*Irish before the Conquest*," Moore's "*Folk-Lore of the Isle of Man*," or Webster's "*Basque Legends*," Dasent's "*Tales from the Norse*," and Frere's "*Old Deccan Days*," and, when you have analysed them, you will find that the native folk-lore of America is as pure, as religious, as beautiful as any of them, and that the same worship of brute force, and, in default of it, of sly treacherous overreaching, which characterizes the tales of Glooscap, Nenaboju, and other New World heroes, is found in most of the Old World traditions. The same is true of the cultured Greek in his marvellous mythology. While Theseus, Hercules, Perseus and Achilles represent the combination of courage and strength, Mercury and Autolycus, Sisyphus, Daedalus, and Ulysses set forth the apotheosis of knavery. To outwit the devil, to sin and escape the punishment of sin, was regarded by the pagan as his highest feat; and like those who would square the circle, invent the universal solvent, and demonstrate perpetual motion, nominal Christians are not lacking who aim at the same impossibility.

The following verses contain one of the better specimens of northern Algonquin legend:

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE WHITE WATER LILY.

'Tis the bright spring time of the northern year,  
 The maples bud red and green;  
 'Neath the tall dark pines, all gloomy and drear,  
 The Mayflower's blossoms begin to appear,  
 And, starting to life through the fallen and sere,  
 The Wake Robin's leaves may be seen,  
 May be seen while the sun sheds his radiance bright  
 O'er forest and lake and stream;  
 But his fires are sinking at dawn of night,  
 O'er the purple hills he is lost to sight,  
 And the last mellow flood of his golden light  
 Gives place to the moon's pale beam.  
 Alone on a couch by nature spread,  
 An Indian warrior lies,  
 White are the lichens that make his bed,  
 Yet not so white as his hoary head,  
 And the glad some light of youth has fled  
 Long since from his glazing eyes.  
 Long days he has wandered through forest and swamp,  
 O'er mountains rugged and high:  
 The bright North Star is the guiding lamp

That beckons him home to his people's camp  
In vain : strength fails, and the cold death damp  
Has told him he must die.

He is going home to the Spirit Land  
That mortal ne'er hath seen,  
Already in vision he seems to stand  
In face of a well known spirit band,  
Who welcome him over the shadowy strand  
To the forest's eternal green.

Then his thoughts fly back to the dear loved spot  
Where his children's camp fires glow :  
And he grieves to think of his own sad lot,  
Alone in the forest to die and rot,  
With the magic arrow so often shot  
From his swift unerring bow.

Well fashioned it was of stout hickory wood  
That shaft no quarry could shun ;  
Its white flint barb had oft drunk the blood  
Of murderous foes, and the red man's food,  
" I could die ' thinks the chief ' in a better mood  
Could I leave this gift to my son."

So he prays to the Spirit who dwells afar  
In the regions of light above,  
" O thou who behold'st where thy children are,  
Send down thy servant, the bright North Star,  
To bear to the foremost in peace and in war  
This sign of his father's love."

His prayer is heard. Ere the chieftain dies,  
The arrow has ta'en its flight ;  
By unseen hands it is winged, and flies  
Far up in the radiant northern skies,  
Till it reaches the goal and safely lies  
In the North Star's guiding light.

Up rises the Evening Star with pride,  
And scorn of her heavenly foes ;  
The Spirit's power she has long defied,  
Now she rushes to meet the red man's guide,  
Till the hostile orbs are side by side,  
And in deadly conflict close.

Fierce battle they wage in the realms of light  
O'er the magic earthly prize ;  
Dark clouds come forth on the face of night,  
To hide from mortals the woeful sight,  
Where the good and the evil spirits fight  
For victory in the skies.

Shot forth in the deadly strife, down fall  
Bright flakes of silvery sheen ;  
Severed from heaven without recall,  
They dart through sky and earth's cloudy pall,  
And glimmer on earth neath the pine trees  
And the maples red and green.

Fast rains descend on earth's star-strewn floor,  
 The tears by the Spirit shed,  
 On the fallen gems of heaven they pour,  
 Till the forest beholds their light no more,  
 But, borne away to the great lake's shore,  
 They lie in its watery bed.

Long weeks pass by, and the heavenly seeds,  
 When the sun and the southern star  
 Pour down the fierce heat that their union breeds,  
 Spring forth, clad in beauty, among the weeds,  
 Like the glorious blossoms that deck the meads  
 Of the Spirit Land afar.

'Tis a sacred flower, and the Indian boy  
 Well knows whence its fragrance was given ;  
 Nor ever forgets, in his heedless joy,  
 That the White Water Lily is no child's toy,  
 But the union of earth's most pure alloy  
 With the silvery glory of heaven.

And still in the far-off northern sky  
 Where the Swan and the Eagle glow,  
 The Magic Arrow is seen to fly,  
 From budding spring till the lilies die,  
 And each star looks down with a loving eye  
 On its sister orbs below.

To analyse the folk-lore of our many Indian tribes would be a pleasant and by no means unprofitable task. We would find several of *Æsop's* fables in their stories, and most of the old nursery favourites, such as Jack the Giant Killer, his namesake of the Beanstalk, Cinderella, St. George and the Dragon, Tom Thumb, Blue Beard, and Beauty and the Beast, showing that the whole world is kin, and that these stories told at the camp-fire arose in very ancient days, when the population of the world was small, and was confined to a limited area between the Tigris and the Nile. That the coincidences in tales told thousands of miles apart are the result of the natural laws of human thought, and that the tales themselves are poetical nature myths, glorifying the sun and similar objects are theories that may satisfy Sir George Cox, the author of "*The Mythology of the Aryan Nations*," and his German teachers, but theories utterly unsatisfactory to Andrew Lang and to anyone who has subjected the so-called myths to anything like scientific analysis and comparison. The ancestors of our American Indians once squatted round the Sphinx and the ruins of the Tower of Babel, where camp-fires were a superfluity, telling these same old tales and granting approbation of the narrator's skill.

It is a trite saying that there is nothing great on earth but man, and that there is nothing great in man but mind. The copious vocabulary, the complex grammatical forms, of our Indian languages exhibit mind, and mind of no small cultivation. The stories told in their

languages evince wonderful memory, observation, descriptive power, imagination, humour, and moral judgment. The Indian is naturally taciturn, some tribes much more so than the others, and one must stand high in his confidence before he will impart to a white man his ancestral lore. He rather prides himself on making little display of what he knows. A garrulous American, having oppressed one of the aborigines with his wisdom, and finding little response, finally sought to draw him into conversation over his dog, one of the sharp-eared native variety. He asked the red man if the dog could fight, could hunt, could herd cattle, could watch the house, to all of which questions the Indian answered "No," always, however, adding the words, "He good dog!" "Why," said the American, "if he can't fight, nor hunt, nor herd, nor watch, what's the use of him anyway?"

"Ugh!" replied poor Lo, with a knowing look, "he good dog; don't know too much."

Before he came into contact with Christianity, oral tradition was the Indian's Bible, as was their mythology that of the Greeks and Romans. Hans Egede, the first Norwegian missionary to the Esquimaux, began to teach them theology at what he thought the right end, namely the Book of Genesis. When he had given his account of the Creation and the Fall, the Esquimaux chief, not to be behind in politeness, gave the native version of the same subjects. This incensed the good missionary, who exclaimed, "These are fables; what I have told you is Divine Truth." "Brother," replied the chief, "we listened attentively to you when you related to us what you had heard from your grandmother; it is not polite in you to speak in that way of what we have heard from our grandmothers." Yet that same chief, Kaiarnack, when the Moravian missionaries sought his help in translating the Gospel of St. John, and came to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter, cried out, "Tell me that again, for I do want to be saved," and became at once the first Christian convert.

While in one sense Folk-Lore is literature, just as the poems of Homer were when recited by the rhapsodists of Asia Minor, long before Lycurgus or Pisistratus reduced them to writing, in the ordinary acceptance of the term it is not. Taking the narrower view which excludes the oral or unwritten tradition, not only is the native folk-lore ruled out; certain more extensive compositions of a semi-historical character share the same fate. We cannot positively deny that they were not in writing before the time of Columbus, but we have not a scrap of evidence to prove that they were. Probably the most important of these is the Book of Rites of the Iroquois or Five Nations, now generally known as the Six Nations through the addition to their number of the Tuscaroras who formerly inhabited North Carolina. Mr. Horatio Hale, for many years a resident in Clinton, Ontario, sought for

copies of this book, first in the Indian reservation on the Grand River near Brantford, and subsequently in the Onondaga reservation in the state of New York near Syracuse. He was fortunate in finding three copies more or less complete of recent date, but taken originally from the manuscript of Chief David, a friend of Brant, who committed the ancient composition to writing in the European character in the middle of last century. The ritual contained in the book is that observed at the meeting of the national council, on the occasion of condolence over the death of a chief and the installation of his successor. Mr. Hale accepts the tradition which fixes its date some fifty years before the arrival of Columbus; but its mention, among the founders of the League, of characters so ancient as almost to deserve the title "mythological," proves that it must have been brought to America in oral or written form from some distant Asiatic seat. The greater part is in prose, but it contains some *karennas* or hymns full of repetition, with a never-ending refrain:

"Continue to listen,  
Thou who wert ruler."

Another native book by no means so ancient, but containing references to the Allighewi or Mound Builders, is the *Walum Olum* or early history of the Delawares, a branch of the large Algonquin family that was found in possession of what became the state of Delaware, and whose own name was Lenni Lenape or Lenape men. Dr. Ward, of Indiana, obtained it from a Delaware in 1822, and it has recently been edited by Dr. Brinton of Philadelphia. Its account of the overthrow of the civilized Mound Builders, whom it calls the Tallegwi, by the Nitilowan or allied Algonquins, and the Talamatan, supposed to be Hurons or Iroquois, is brief, and, as the only record of the warfare, full of interest:

"Some (Algonquins) went to the east, and the Tallegwi killed a portion:  
Then all of one mind exclaimed War! War!  
The Talamatan and the Nitilowan go united.  
Kinnipehend was the leader, and they went over the river  
And they took all that was there, and despoiled and slew the Tallegwi.  
Pimokhasuwi was next chief, and then the Tallegwi were far too strong.  
Tenehekensit followed, and many towns were given up to him.  
Paganchihilla was chief, and the Tallegwi all went southward.  
South of the lakes the Lenape settled their council fire, and north of the lakes  
were their friends, the Talamatan."

The war seems to have lasted about a century, or during the government of four head chiefs, whose names, unlike those of Hiawatha and Atotarho in the Book of Rites, are otherwise unknown to fame. It must have taken place long before the arrival of the Spaniards.

A document which certainly was written in 1735 is that known as "The Migration Legend of the Creeks." These Creeks inhabited Georgia and parts of adjoining states, along with their relatives, the Choctaws.

Chicasas and Seminoles. In the year indicated, their chief, Tehikilli, handed to Governor Ogleshorpe, for transmission to King George, a buffalo skin curiously written in red and black characters. This skin has been sought for in vain in the Record and other English Government offices; but a German translation has been discovered made from the English one that accompanied the document, and from this Mr. Gatschet, of the Bureau of Ethnology at Washington, has reconstructed the language of the Creek original. If anyone chooses to deny that the buffalo skin was inscribed with genuine written characters, and to insist that they were mere pictographs, there is no existing evidence to convince him of the contrary. The story told in the legend is that of the Creeks' journey from some distant land to their American settlement. As an early halting place is described which contained red rivers and active volcanoes, it is probable that Kamtchatka is the point whence they left the shores of Asia for the New World.

Had Tehikilli's buffalo skin been in evidence, it would have materially affected the tone of American archaeology. By no means an unmitigated blessing of our present age is what is called public opinion. This is not really such, but the dictum of a clique or faction possessing special opportunities for disseminating its views and sufficient bullying power to terrorize into submission and outward adherence the cowardly multitude. All who oppose this public opinion or method of science, or whatever name the muzzle and gag of speech and inquiry may bear, are cranks and imposters, foolish or wicked men whose mouths must be stopped, and who must be made to sit down. Such a clique has been ruling in archaeological circles in the United States since the time of Schoolcraft. Here is his dogmatic statement to which, in the face of abundant evidence to the contrary, the mass of American historians adheres: "Nothing is more demonstrable than that whatever has emanated in the graphic or inscriptive art on this continent from the red race does not aspire above the simple art of pictography; and whenever an alphabet of any kind is veritably discovered, it must have had a foreign origin. By granting belief to anything contravening this state of art, we at first deceive ourselves, and then lend our influence to diffuse error." The self-deception and diffusion of error were Schoolcraft's and are still the work of the many who countenance the ignorant dogmatism of an otherwise diligent student and estimable character.

To answer dogmatism with dogmatism would be to imitate the Welsh kings and invite their fate. There were two kings formerly in Britain, named Nynniaw and Peibiaw. As these two ranged the fields one starlight night, "See," said Nynniaw, "what a beautiful and extensive field I possess!"

"Where is it?"

"The whole firmament," said Nynniaw, "as far as vision can extend."

"And do thou see," said Peibiaw, "what countless herds and flocks of cattle and sheep I have, depasturing thy field?"

"Where are they?" said Nynniaw.

"Why, the whole host of stars which thou seest," said Peibiaw, "and each of golden effulgence, with the moon for their shepherdess to superintend their wanderings."

"They shall not graze in my pasture," said Nynniaw.

"They shall," said Peibiaw.

"They shall not," said one; "they shall," said the other, repeatedly in banded contradiction, until at last it arose to wild contention between them, and from contention it came to furious war. At length, when they were tired out, Rhitta Gawr, the giant, vanquished them, and added their beards to the fur lining of his cloak. A great deal of archaeological and other ological discussion is of the "you shall—you shan't" order, but there is a more excellent way. I submit a threefold proof of the statement that the aborigines of América formerly possessed written characters of definite phonetic value, which were not pictographs, although in two cases out of the three they were hieroglyphics.

When, after the conquest, the Spanish missionaries began their work among the more intelligent of the Mexicans, they found them in possession of a system of hieroglyphic syllabic writing. The hieroglyphics were representations generally of natural, but sometimes of artificial objects, the former including animal, vegetable and mineral forms, and parts of the human body. As the missionaries read to their converts the Latin prayers of the church, their converts set them down upon native paper in their nearest Aztec equivalents: thus—



These four symbols are a flag, in Aztec *patli*, a conventional representation of a stone, *tetl*, an Indian fig, *nochtli*, and the stone repeated. Taking the first syllable, consisting of a consonant and an open vowel, from each of these, they give *pate note*, which is as near to the Spanish pronunciation of *Pater noster* as the Aztec, which has no "r," could come. The Spaniards found the Mexicans in possession of this hieroglyphic syllabary, and in it they wrote out the long offices of the Church. Schoolcraft did not know this, and probably was not to blame for his ignorance, but he was to blame for making his imperfect knowledge the measure of truth. His argument is virtually the same as that of those who deny the possibility of miracles and divine revelation: what we have not witnessed never was nor can be.

In the Mexican state of Chiapas, in Yucatan, and on the borders of Honduras are stone tablets elaborately engraved with groups of hieroglyphics in rounded squares, quite different from the Mexican, and not unlike those of Easter Island, in the South Pacific, which attracted the attention of Captain Beechey, Lady Brassey and other travellers. Of the Central American tablets the best known are those of Palenque, in Chiapas, of Chichen Itza, in Yucatan, and of Copan, near Honduras. The subjoined pair of groups is in the centre of the ninth line of characters on the left side of the Palenque Tablet of the Cross.



They are ideographic, not syllabic, and are to be interpreted by the Maya language of Yucatan, which is entirely distinct and widely different from the Aztec of Mexico. The balls or dots are units, and the staves or short lines are fives. In the first group these amount to thirteen, in Maya *oxlahun*. The following cartouche contains a **T** or cross, which is the symbol of building, in Maya *pak*, but in corresponding groups it is replaced by the head of a dog, *pek*. To the left of the second group is a ball, representing the number one, *hun*. Below it is a conventional representation of a collar, *ahan*, representing a king, a ruler, or a period of time. The larger and more elaborate *ahan* on the right stands upon three balls, which in this position do not read as three, but as plurality, *ob*. The reading of the two groups, therefore, is :

*Oxlahun Pek, hun ahan ahanob.*  
Thirteen Dogs, one King of Kings.

This may seem very absurd, but a reference to the Annals of the Cachi-quels explains it fully. Thirteen Dogs was the name of a Cachiquel chief, who, originally a vassal of the Quiche kings of Guatemala, shook off their yoke, and, some fifty years before the arrival of the Spaniards, brought all Central America under his sway, from Oaxaca, an independent kingdom, to the isthmus. Thus it was that Oxlahun Pek became "one King of Kings."

As my third proof, I am fortunate in being able to present the characters of the Inscribed Rock of Yarmouth, in Nova Scotia, which, having been known for nearly a century, cannot be ranked by the dogmatists in their favourite category of frauds. Its rude forms are similar to those found in burial mounds in Iowa, Ohio and West Virginia on comparatively small plates of stone, which are as genuine as the Yarmouth Rock,

and are entirely different from those of the Wyrick Stones and other supposed Hebrew relics. This is the Yarmouth inscription :



It consists of twelve symbols, that preceding the **V**, which is fourth from the end of the line, being formed of two angles that, properly represented, should be parallel and close together. They are syllabic, like the Mexican hieroglyphics, and are transliterated as follows :

*bu bi de ka ku tu ra de bu shi ku ka.*

In old Japanese this reads,

*wabi deka Kuturade bushi goku.*

Peacefully has gone out Kuturade, warrior eminent,

which may be rendered.

“Kuturade, the eminent warrior, has died in peace.”

It may very naturally be asked how it is known that such is the reading, and how a Japanese inscription could be found in Nova Scotia? The answer to the first question is that the identical writing in question has been found in Siberia, Mongolia, and Japan, and the representations of numerous inscriptions in it published in St. Petersburg, Helsingfors, and other points in the Russian empire afford ample opportunity for detecting the original of the American Mound Builder syllabary. As for the appearance of old Japanese in America, I have shown repeatedly that the Choctaw, the Creek or Maskoki, the Chicasa and all their related tongues are simply Japanese dialects. That linguistic family, probably by means of such literary compositions as The Migration Legend, preserved the purity of ancient speech, so much corrupted in other tribes of the same origin as to exhibit to the casual observer no trace of its family relationship. It is not at all likely that an ancient Choctaw ever found his way to Nova Scotia, nor is it necessary to suppose that the inscriptions in the mounds of the United States were the work of members of the Creek Confederacy. Japanese was the classical or literary speech of the Mound Builders, whatever may have been their vulgar dialects. It was doubtless confined to their medicine men or scribes, originally a priestly caste, and was the Latin of their religious formulas and mortuary inscriptions. Kuturade was apparently an Iroquois, whose modern name would be Katorats, The Hunter. Of course, he may have been a Huron, and there is reason for thinking that his memorial might belong to the early historical period of French colonization. We cannot tell when our Indians

lost their ancient art of writing, which the Creeks at least seem to have retained to the middle of last century.

One of the latest additions to the London Zoo is the comically solemn, large goatsucker, known as the *Podiceps*, which gobbles up mice as a fowl does grains of wheat, and perches by preference on tombstones. I shall not follow his example any further at present, but dismiss the brief literature of native epitaphs, and the wide field of not unprofitable speculation that even the Yarmouth Rock opens up. I may simply add that some of the Mound Builder stones bear Buddhist dates, and that the oldest of these, the stones found near Davenport in the state of Iowa, belong to the eighth century. The graphic systems of the Mexicans and of the Maya-Quiche peoples of Central America lead us at once into what was originally a very extensive literature. I say, originally very extensive, because so much of it is lost. It is amazing what the world, in spite of all its progress, has lost by natural calamity, by neglect, by criminality. I think it was Archbishop Whately, in his lectures on Political Economy, who, first among the moderns, drew attention to lost arts, a subject I talked over many years ago with Dr. Edkins, of Pekin, who had noted many traces of such loss in the islands of the Pacific. The late Dr. Francis Parkman, in a similar conversation, indicated that many of our Indian tribes could no longer manufacture the stone pipes and other objects, the fabrication of which had made their ancestors famous. As to lost books, who shall number them? Where are Solomon's works on natural history of which Ruskin writes so tenderly in his Lectures on Architecture and Painting; and where, the Book of Jasher, the Book of the Wars of the Lord, and St. Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans? Men would give a fortune to get back the lost books of Livy and of Diodorus Siculus, of Menander, and of Manetho. We read Josephus, Julius Africanus and Eusebius, only to long after the works of the many ancient authors they quote from, lost works, most of which will never be found. When the persecution of Diocletian raged in the beginning of the fourth century, the original autographs of the New Testament writings, and thousands of other Christian manuscripts, went to the flames. So, with the difference of faith and religious value, was it in Mexico. As Dr. Brinton says, "When Bishop Landa in Yucatan and Bishop Zumarraga in Mexico made bonfires in the public squares of Mani and Tlatilulco of the priceless literary treasures of the Mayas and Aztecs, their maps, their parchment rolls, their calendars on wood, their painted paper books, their inscribed histories, it is recorded that the natives bewailed bitterly this obliteration of their sciences and their archives." Landa wrote, "We burned all we could find of them, which pained the natives to an extraordinary degree." Until the millennium comes men will be found eager and zealous in burning other people's idols, but very jealous and conservative of their own. The

bigot and the iconoclast are twin brothers; liberty is foreign to them both.

Torquemada says that five cities alone contributed no fewer than sixteen thousand bundles of manuscript. Nevertheless, Landa and Zumarraga did not burn all the native books, and even of those that were burned the retentive aboriginal memory preserved the chief contents, which, in later days were set down, no longer in the hieroglyphics of Mexico and Central America, but in European letters, sometimes in Spanish, but as often in the original tongues. To enumerate the Mexican and Maya manuscripts that escaped the fire and are now in public or private libraries in Europe and in Mexico, would be at once a difficult and a thankless task, inasmuch as scholars are still undecided as to their interpretation. In his magnificent work on Mexico, Lord Kingsborough embodied all the Aztec manuscripts available in his time. The best known Maya codices are those of Dresden, of Paris, called Peresianus, and of Madrid, called Troano. The intelligible pre-Columbian literature survives in the works of natives who made use of ancient materials after the conquest. The quantity of the historical and descriptive material alone may be judged from the fact that the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, in his *History of the Civilized Nations of Mexico and Central America*, occupies not far from 2,700 large octavo pages in setting it forth. It is true that the enthusiastic Abbé was inclined to be discursive, even garrulous, but he had his authorities well in hand and used them freely.

More than fifty manuscripts written in European characters, but in the Mexican, Aztec, or Nahuatl Language, are known to exist, but very few of them have been published. One of the most important of these is *The Mexican Chronicle of Chimalpain*, or more fully, of Don Domingo de San Anton Muñon Chimalpain. It is yet unedited. The chief native histories of Mexico are written in excellent Spanish and in admirable historical style by Ixtlilxochitl and Tezozomoc, who flourished about the year 1600 but refer to ancient authorities who wrote prior to the Conquest. Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl was a descendant of the royal line of Tezcuco, one of the Mexican kingdoms. Proud of his parentage, he industriously sought out the antiquities of his people, and, from old documents, compiled at least five extensive historical works, two of which, *Relaciones Historicas* and *Historia Chichimeca*, are to be found in Lord Kingsborough's collections. Fernando de Alvarado Tezozomoc, another descendant of the Aztecs of old, wrote a *Cronica Mexicana*, which is highly thought of, although he does not seem to have taken the care in verifying his statements of fact that characterizes the work of Ixtlilxochitl. Similar service was rendered to the history of Peru by Garcilasso de la Vega, whose mother was the granddaughter of the Inca Tupac Yupanqui, the third removed from the unfortunate Atahualpa whom Pizarro put to death. His *Royal Commentaries* written in 1575, are

looked upon with some suspicion, but substantially agree with other accounts of ancient events compiled by Spanish writers. His patriotism, which may occasionally have warped his judgment, is as creditable to him as is that of Ixtlilxochitl and Tezozomoc to these scions of Mexican nobility. It is strange that no trace of writing has been found among the Peruvians, and that they should have been able, by their different coloured quippos or knotted cords alone, to hand down to posterity the large amount of literary material contained in their extensive histories. What is still more remarkable in this connection is the fact that the Chibchas of Colombia, their nearest civilized neighbours, evidently practised the graphic art, although they left no literature beyond a few brief inscriptions.

Here is a story taken by Ixtlilxochitl from the Annals of Tezcuco. "King Nezahual-coyotl loved to go out in disguise into the streets of his capital or to stroll through the suburbs, either alone or with a very small escort ; his desire was to place himself in a position to learn for himself what the people thought of his government, and whether they had any just cause of complaint against those employed by him. Being out one day dressed as a huntsman accompanied by a single officer, he met a poor child, who with great difficulty had gathered some wretched sticks of wood to carry home. The king said to him, 'Why don't you go into the forest ? you will find more dry wood there than you can carry away.'

'I shall never do anything of the kind,' replied the child, 'for the king would have me killed.'

'But who is the king ?' responded Nezahual-coyotl. 'He is a miser,' cried the child, 'for he takes away from the people what God gives them full-handed.'

Vainly the monarch endeavoured to get him to transgress the limits decreed, promising that nobody would say anything about it. But the child fell into a rage, and said to him, "You are nothing but a traitor and the enemy of my parents, since you advise me to do a thing that might cost them their lives." The king then returned to his palace, leaving the officer behind with orders to follow the boy, and to bring him into his presence along with his parents. They came terror-stricken, not knowing why Nezahual-coyotl had sent for them. On their appearance before him, he put into their hands, by means of his intendants, several bundles of stuffs, maize, cocoa, and other presents : then he dismissed them, thanking the child for the lesson he had given him, and complimenting him for his strict obedience to the laws. From that moment he repealed his former statute, and allowed everybody to enter the royal forests to pick up or cut down dead wood, on condition that they should not touch living trees.

The following extract is from Tezozomoc, and tells how the Mexicans

in 1428 were stirred up to refuse submission to the proud warrior, Maxtlaton, king of the Tepanecs.

"Why," cried the old man; "Why, Tenuchcas, do you refuse to submit? Are your hearts not filled with pity at the sight of so many old men, of women and children, who through your fault, will become victims of the Tepanecs? Your enemies are so numerous that the mountains are covered with them, and, if you do not accept their yoke, one of you must fight with more than ten. The mountains and the forests are their ramparts; and we, we have not even a rock behind which to shelter ourselves from their fury."

When the elders had ceased speaking, at once a thousand voices were raised against the timorous proposition.

"We shall know how to make war as our fathers did before us," they exclaimed on every side. "Have we no longer arrows and bucklers? If our country falls into an enemy's power, our honour at least shall be vindicated."

The elders, frightened at this determination, made vain efforts to change it. They pointed out to the Mexicans their fewness in number, exaggerating the forces of Maxtlaton.

"And what about us, then?" cried out the young men of all classes in the assembly, labourers, fishermen and merchants. "So you count us for nothing? We shall know how to vindicate the memory of our king and to make ourselves respected by the whole world."

"Go, then," replied the old men, vanquished by this last shaft. "Go! If you return victors over the Tepanecs you shall be our equals. We will ennoble you, your wives and your children."

Then, with one voice, all joined in the cry, "War! War! Let not a soul stay behind in his house nor rest by the way until we have triumphed over our enemies." It is interesting to learn that the Mexican youths' confidence in their valour was well placed and that they scattered the Tepanecs of Maxtlaton.

I add a very brief extract from another native historian, Garcilasso, of Peru. The mummified remains of some of the Incas had been taken up by the Spaniards from their resting places in Cuzco and placed in Lima. One of these was the body of Huayna Capac, who had died about eighty years before. "It was so well preserved that it seemed to be in life. The eyes were made of very thin gold, and so well formed that they seemed natural; and the whole body was prepared with a species of bitumen. There appeared on the head the scar of a stone thrown in war, and the long hair was visible, very hoary and perfect." Here is Garcilasso's touching little comment: "The bodies weighed so little that any Indian might carry them in his arms or on his shoulders from house to house of the gentlemen who wished to see them. They carried them, covered with cloths, through the streets and squares, sur-

rounded by the Indians, worshipping them with tears and groans; and many Spaniards lifted their caps as they passed, because they were the bodies of kings, which was so grateful to the Indians that they could not sufficiently express their thanks." I suppose Garcilasso was himself grateful for this homage, which was after the fashion of the Jews, who built the sepulchres of the prophets their fathers slew. Yet the rough Spanish soldier saluting the corpses of the Incas of old is a study to arrest attention and suspend hasty judgment. After all, there was some good in these Spaniards, spite of their gold-lust and cruelty; there was an apprehension of "noblesse oblige" in the heart of their ridiculous Castilian pride and cowardly domination over the simple American native. I question if Tommy Atkins came to the present or even to the shoulder when the mummy of the great Rameses was carried to the Gizeh palace near Cairo. Not that Tommy would not do it if he had only been taught, although kinship would help him to it, as in the case of Napoleon's remains:

" A king is standing there,  
And, with uncovered head,  
Receives him in the name of France,  
Receiveth whom? The dead!"

I have said that three manuscripts in the Maya writing of Yucatan have been published. Some three or four more are known to be in existence. Other literary languages belonging to the same family as the Maya are the Quiche and the Cachiuel of Guatemala. The principal literary record of Yucatan is that called the Books of Chilán Balam, or of the interpreting priest. Balam means both a priest and a tiger in Maya, which is almost as unflattering a coincidence as the Japanese name for England, *Yei-koku*, which also means the kingdom of drunkenness. Balaam, the son of Beor, who was reproved by the speaking ass, must surely have been an ancient Maya priest, possessed with something of the tiger's greed.

The books consist of prophecies, astrological lore, medical recipes and historical material. They were in existence, necessarily in hieroglyphic form, before the conquest, as they are alluded to by the earliest writers on the affairs of Yucatan. Dr. Brinton has published what is historical in them, under the title of *The Maya Chronicles*. There is a quaintness in the sad simplicity of their meagre narrative. "The eighth *ahau*: Chakanputun was abandoned. For thirteen score years Chakanputun was ruled by the men of Itza. Then they came in search of their homes a second time; and they lost the road to Chakanputun. In this *katan* those of Itza were under the trees, under the boughs, under the branches, to their sorrow."

For those who had lived in large cities and in spacious communal houses built of stone, this enforced life in the open air, beneath the forest

arches, must have been a painful experience, one to dwell long in the nation's memory. But, as the author of the Bible Book of Chronicles says in one place, "these are ancient things."

More intelligible is the Maya Chronicle of Chac Xulub Chen, which Dr. Brinton includes in his volume. Its author was a chief, named Nakuk Pech, in 1562, who gives an account of the arrival of the Spaniards in his part of Yucatan. The Chronicle contains a prophecy of the arrival of the conquerors similar to that of Montezuma among the Mexicans. A grateful reference to the Auditor, Don Tomas Lopez, who came to Yucatan in 1553, is of double interest, as indicating the cruelty of the Spaniards on the one hand, and the progress of the Mayas in agriculture and the arts on the other.

"He put a stop to our being burned by the Spaniards; he put a stop to our being bitten by dogs. He introduced the appointing of chiefs in each village by the giving of the baton. He also adjusted the tribute for the third time, the tribute introduced by the Spaniards, mantles, wax, pheasants, maize, buckets, salt, peppers, broad beans, narrow beans, jars, pots, vases, all for tribute to our Spanish rulers which we paid before the Auditor had given his attention to these things."

For the history of Guatemala, Brasseur de Bourbourg relies chiefly on the Quiche Manuscript of Chichicastenango, this long name being that of the town in which it was discovered. The learned abbé says that it is written in Quiche *d'une grande élégance*, and that its author must have been a prince of the royal family of Guatemala. He thinks it was written soon after the arrival of the Spaniards, and at the time when the ancient books of the Quiches disappeared. The expression "disappeared" is very euphemistic, and not calculated to hurt the feelings of ecclesiastics disposed to champion the persecuting Landa. With the exception of its historical account of the later Quiche kings, it is largely copied from a much older book, known as The Popol Vuh, or book of the people, which Dr. Brinton calls a compendious account of the mythology and traditional history of the Quiches of Guatemala. Spanish and French translations of it have been published, and Max Müller has an essay on it in the first volume of his *Chips from a German Workshop*. Elsewhere I have called it the wildest, most fantastic history that the world contains. The fall of the hated kingdom of Xibalba is the theme of this epic.

The Quiches had once been victorious over Xibalba, but had lost their power, and the hated kingdom became strong again under its two kings Hunecame and Wucubcame, when the Quiche monarch Exbalanque died. His brother Hunahpu remained at Tula, where he had two sons, whom he taught to be skilful warriors and magicians. After his wife's death, Hunahpu and his bachelor brother are represented as journeying towards Xibalba to play ball or lacrosse with its two kings and their tributaries. This playing ball was very deadly work, for it cost the two

their lives. But, in a supernatural way, Xquic, the daughter of one of the thirteen princes of Xibalba, became the mother of Hunahpu and Exbalanque, sons of the murdered Hunahpu. Prior to their birth she had left Xibalba, and had cast herself upon the protection of the mother and sons of the dead Hunahpu, who treated her and her children harshly. But these children grew up, endowed with marvellous power and wisdom, every juggling feat ever performed by the most accomplished of Oriental wizards being imputed to them. They first showed their skill by transforming their half-brothers into monkeys, whose appearance was so grotesque that their grandmother Xmucane, though grieving over their metamorphosis, was compelled to laugh at their grimaces, whereupon they left in dudgeon and betook themselves to the woods. Then the wonderful children cultivated the ground, while, night after night, wild beasts came and destroyed their work. They kept watch accordingly, and, one night, caught a mouse, which, like Manawyddan, son of Llŷr, in the Welsh *Mabinogi*, they were about to torture in revenge for the injuries committed, when, begging for life, it told them that agriculture was not for such as them; let them take up the ball-playing in which their father and uncle had fallen. The lads, who remind one of the Epigoni returning to Thebes to avenge their fathers, hurled the ball towards Xibalba, after bidding farewell to their mother and grandmother.

Once on their way, the creatures did their bidding; the Xans, small stinging gnats, were their spies, and the birds called Molay carried them over the rivers. When they arrived in the hated land they were shut up by the thirteen of Xibalba in a place of darkness, which they filled with light. A game of lacrosse took place next day, and the brothers were victorious. Again, inclosed in a house in which sharp flint knives revolved, they by magic made them cease their deadly revolutions; and, when commanded to fill four vases with rare flowers in that place of horrors, they called in the aid of the ants Zanpopos, who, in spite of the precautions of the royal guards, cut down the choicest blossoms in the gardens of the kings and brought them to the prisoners. They then passed the ordeals of the house of ice, the house of tigers, and that of fire; but, in the house of the bats, Hunahpu lost his head, so that Exbalanque had to provide him with a new one. Then followed the most astounding prodigies. A funeral pyre was lit; the brothers threw themselves upon it and were burned to ashes. The joyous Xibalbans threw the ashes into the river, and, five days after, two youths of great beauty, but with fishes' tails, disported themselves in its stream and mocked the thirteen councillors. Afterwards they appeared in the streets of the city as old men clothed in tatters, dancing wild dances, burning houses and restoring them, killing each other and coming to life again. Summoned before the princes, they came and repeated their miraculous juggleries, putting many people to death and reviving them.

At length, wrought to a frenzy by the miracles, the kings Hunucame and Wucucame demanded to be thus killed and restored. The brothers, after some hesitation, tore their hearts from their breasts, cut off their heads, and then refused to resurrect the slain. Terror seized the court, and the princes attempted to flee, but in vain ; all but one perished in the slaughter that ensued, and the Votanide empire of Xibalba came to an end. This is the main story of the Popol Vuh, which received additions down to Spanish days, for it ends thus : " This is all that remains of the existence of Quiche ; for it is impossible to see the book in which formerly the kings could read everything. It is all over with those of Quiche. It is now called Santa Cruz."

The Cachiquels were a brave people of Guatemala allied to the Quiches and the Mayas. They also had their history, which Dr. Brinton calls one of the most noteworthy monuments of American antiquity. It is termed The Record from Teeapan Atitlan, that being the name of the place in which it was found. It is in the Cachiquel language, but in European characters, and its compilers were Don Francisco Ernantez Arana Xahila, who was writing it in 1581, and Don Francisco Tiaz Gebuta Queh. The following is its description of the battle of Iximche, in which Oxlahun Pek or Thirteen Dogs and his cousin Cablahun Tox or Twelve Knives overthrew the supremacy of the Quiches and made themselves masters of Central America.

"The instant the lights of morn, descending from the summit of the mountains, began to illumine the earth, the shouts and yells of warfare suddenly broke forth, banners were unfurled, and together were heard resounding the drum, the war trumpets and the shells of battle ; it was a terrible thing, the descent of the Quiches. They came in quick order, and from afar their companies could be seen following each other with speed, coming down to the base of the mountain. They made no delay in reaching the houses built along the water's edge on the bank of the river ; following them came the Kings Tepepul and Iztayul escorting their god. Then they found themselves face to face with the Cachiquel battalions. The shock was truly terrifying ; immediately the yells, the shouts, the drums, the trumpets, and the shells of battle rang out, mingling with the incantations of the heroes. Soon the Quiches were broken on every side, almost before they came to hand-to-hand combat. They were completely routed ; the Quiche nation was given over to death, and none may compute the number of those who perished. A great multitude who surrendered as prisoners were taken along with the Kings Tepepul and Iztayul, whom their god gave into our hands. This is, indeed, why the Gahel Achi, the Ahpop Achi, the grandfather and the son of the chief jeweller, the chief treasurer, the chief secretary, the chief engraver, and all the Achihab were put to the sword ; it was not by eight nor by sixteen thousand that the Quiches were counted who were slain there by

the Cachiuels, our fathers and elders used to say, O my children ! Such were the lofty deeds of Kings Oxlahun Pek and Cablahun Tox, as well as Woo Imox and Rokelbatzin ; it is thus and not otherwise that they glorified the mountain of Iximche."

The portrait of the great warrior known as Oxlahun Pek or Thirteen Dogs, in Cachiuel Oxlahun Tzy, is found on the Palenque Tablet of the Cross, which is figured in Dr. Rau's monograph on the tablet, in Professor Cyrus Thomas's Study of the Manuscript Troano, and in Professor Short's North Americans of Antiquity. He is the larger, burlier figure of the two represented, the small one being his later ally, Cocyoetza, King of Oaxaca. Thirteen Dogs is a fine specimen of a large well nurtured, sensual Malay, and the records of his deeds in the middle of the fifteenth century, at Palenque, Copan, and Chichen-Itza, show him to have been a monster of cruelty. Yet in this respect he seems to have been inferior to some of the Mexican monarchs, who, in order to appease their diabolical gods, at times offered them over one hundred thousand victims, captives taken in war or defenceless creatures made prisoners in slave hunting raids. Naturally one would deem a savage superstitious nature and a state of almost constant warfare incompatible with the exercise of literary talent, but, on the contrary, such has never been the case. Take away from all ancient literature what pertains to war and superstition, and very small will be the residuum. Even tales of friendship and of love, save in parts of the inspired record, are found bound up with one or both of these. We do not wonder that John Ruskin, contemplating the brutality of individuals among the English lower classes who had received a common school education, insisted on the necessity for more than a mere literary training to lift a human being out of the state of savagery.

The ancient Mexicans had prayer-books, with the prayers of which all religious persons were familiar, although only the priests and the higher classes, who alone received a college education, were able to read them. The formula at baptism was :

"May the invisible God descend upon this water and efface the sin and impurity thou hast contracted before the foundation of the world. But remember thou, that the life thou hast begun is sorrowful and full of pain, crowded with afflictions and miseries. Thou shalt only eat thy bread by the price of thy labour. May God come to thy help in the numberless adversities that await thee."

The formula following the song of death at the funeral of a king was :

"Arise, lord, and set yourself on the road to rejoin your father, the sovereign of the abode of the dead and of the region of oblivion, where day and night are equally unknown, where rest is eternal, where your mother, the queen of shades, awaits you, and where you shall rest from your kingly toils in the midst of your ancestors."

This was a common form of prayer :

"O all powerful god who givest light to men, whom we address by the name of Titlacahuan, do me the favour of giving me all that is needful for the support of my days in meat and drink, to make me rejoice in thy mercy and in thy goodness, and to alleviate my labours and my pains. Have pity on me who lives a life of sorrow, of poverty, and of neglect, since I labour in thy service, sweeping and cleansing thy dwelling place and making the fire that sustains thy perfumes and incense. Open, therefore, thy most merciful hands, and look down upon me with thy favour."

Perhaps the oldest lyrical composition of an American people which survives is that which illustrates almost dramatically the sin and repentance of the good Quetzal-coatl, called the White God, the preacher of peace and virtue, a western Buddha. The dark god Tezeatlipoca was his great enemy, and planned his fall through a woman who invented the intoxicating drink called *pulqué* and sent some to him. Then the friends and allies of the dark god sang to Quetzal-coatl :

"Lord well-beloved, permit us to sing :  
Here is the song that you love,  
O palace brilliant with quetzal plumes,  
O palace of fair turquoise stones,  
With emeralds like water streaming,  
I shall not cease adorning you :  
An ya ! An ya !"

When the temptress came to join the wise monarch, the evil ones sang :

"O Quetzal-petlatl,  
Dear sister rejoice ;  
Let us be intoxicated with pleasure,  
To the well-beloved of Quetzal-coatl  
Let us sing, let us sing,  
Ay ya ! ya ay !  
Behold, behold !"

The king came to himself and repented : then he sang :

"My mother, my worthy mother,  
Gazed on me in my drunkenness,  
She said 'This is no son of mine :  
That one there is not the holy lord.'  
Miserable me, I weep, and cry alas !"

His true friends took their instruments of music, and to their accompaniment sang his praises :

"Our holy lord is come ;  
It is himself :  
He fills our hearts with joy.  
It is he, it is the Quetzal-coatl,  
Scatter emeralds over his throne,  
Let him shed no more tears in these regions."

Nezahual-coyotl, who became king of Acolhuacan in Mexico in 1431 and who crowned the first Montezuma, was a poet and a Cassandra-like prophet of evil. At the dedication of a temple in 1467 he sang sorrowfully :

“ When will the temple be destroyed that we consecrate to-day ?

Who will be present at its downfall ?

Shall it be my children or my grandchildren ?

Then the country will decay and princes come to an end.

The maguey will be cut before it attains its full growth ;

Trees will cast their premature fruits, and the ground will become barren.

From early years men and women will give themselves up to vice and sensuality ;

They will take pleasure in plundering one another.”

In another similar poem we find him saying :

“ Listen to what Nezahual-coyotl says concerning the evils yet to afflict his kingdom.

O King Yoyontzin, when thou shalt have quitted this life for another,

The time will come when thy vassals shall be conquered and wretched.

Then, indeed, the power will cease to be in thy hands ; for it will be in those of God.

Then thy children and thy grandchildren will experience a thousand calamities,

and weeping will think of thee :

For they shall be orphans and shall serve strangers in their own land.

Thus empires come to an end ; for power here below lasts but a little while.

All we possess in this life is only lent to us, and we must give it up at the moment least expected.

Thus so many others have relinquished before us.

O Nezual-coyotzin, thou shalt no longer see

Zihuapantzin, Acoluahucatzin and Quauhtzontezoma,

From whom thou wert at one time inseparable.”

Yoyontzin and Nezual-coyotzin are other names of Nezahual-coyotl, who throughout the piece apostrophizes himself. The prophetic anticipation of the advent of the Spaniards was common to all the kingdoms of Mexico and Central America.

The most ancient poetical compositions of the wild Indian are his religious songs, which are often full of archaic words unintelligible sometimes even to the priest or medicine man. They are painfully monotonous, but not half as much so as the Old Grimes of University students. A Cherokee charm for a bear, in hunting, is :

“ He ! hayuya haniwa, hayuya haniwa, hayuya haniwa, hayuya haniwa.

In rabbit place you were born—Yoho !

In mulberry place you were born—Yoho !

In Uyaye you were born—Yoho !

In the great swamp you were born—Yoho !

And now surely we and the good black things, the best of all, shall see each other.”

The Navajo corn dance is accompanied with the chant :

“ From below my corn comes ;

I walk with you.

From above, young water ;

I walk with you.

From above, vegetation ;

I walk with you.

From below the earth corn pollen comes ;

I walk with you.”

It is the divinity or corn-giver with whom the dancer walks.

Another Navajo hymn is that to the thunder :

“ Thonah ! Thonah !  
 There is a voice above,  
 The voice of the thunder.  
 Within the dark cloud  
 Again and again it sounds,  
 Thonah ! Thonah ! ”

The Spanish missionaries found the now extinct Taensas of the lower Mississippi in possession of the following pleasing composition, cited by Dr. Brinton :

“ Tikaens, thou buildest a house, thou bringest thy wife to live in it.  
 Thou art married, Tikaens, thou art married.  
 Thou wilt become famous ; thy children will name thee among the elders. Think  
 of Tikaens as an old man.  
 By what name is thy bride known ? Is she beautiful ? Are her eyes soft as the  
 light of the moon ? Is she a strong woman ?  
 Didst thou understand her signs during the dance ?  
 I know not whether thou lovest her, Tikaens,  
 What said the old man, her father, when thou askedst for his pretty daughter ?  
 What betrothal presents didst thou give ?  
 Rejoice, Tikaens ! Be glad, be happy !  
 Build thyself a happy home,  
 This is the day of its building ! ”

There are some still more poetical pieces than these that I might quote, but there is no evidence of their ante-Columbian origin. In studying the folk-lore and the rhythmical compositions of the Indians, one cannot help observing the similarity of both to the poetical and prose lore of Uncle Remus, a strange coincidence, for, save in the case of the Black Caribs and the Sambos of Honduras, the negro and the Indian have little in common. Squier tells how these Sambos or Negro Indians dance for hours, singing :

“ Shovel-nosed shark,  
 Grandmother, grandmother !  
 Shovel-nosed shark,  
 Grandmother ! ”

For my part, I prefer Tikaens.

Scenic representations were part of the religion of the American Indians, as among the inhabitants of Southern India, Ceylon, and the Malay Archipelago. As, in the middle ages, the miracle and mystery plays were employed by ecclesiastics to familiarize the vulgar mind, slow to reason abstractly, with the facts of redemption and pure living, so the aborigines of this continent, under the guidance of their spiritual advisers, performed, and in some places still perform, what may be called religious plays which embody their religious or mythological traditions. The hideous masks pictured in the Yakum Nattannawa and in the Kolan Nattannawa, which set forth the devil masquerade of Ceylon, are reproduced among the natives of eastern Siberia, of the Aleutian Islands,

among various tribes of British Columbia and others of the United States, Mexico, Central and South America. The drama is part of their religion, and when they act they perform an act of devotion, although it is very hard for a well-trained Christian to see it in that light. Perhaps the monk who takes the part of Satan at Oberammergau, like the Jesuit, does it *ad maiorem gloriam Dei*, or in plain English, to the greater glory of God. Frequently these dramatic representations constitute the initiation of young members of tribes into the mysteries of their religion, answering to the old Orphic rites and the arcana of Eleusis in ancient Greece.

Some of the Spanish ecclesiastics composed miracle plays and mysteries, and farces too, for the benefit of their converts in Mexico and Central America; but the drama was there before them. The Comedy Ballet of Guëguënce, written in the Nicaraguan jargon of the Aztec, and edited and translated by Dr. Brinton in its present form, belongs to post-Columbian days, but is evidently a rehash of an old aboriginal work, full of coarse, rough Rabelaisian humour. In his *Aboriginal Authors*, Dr. Brinton says: "The characters are a wily old rascal Guëguënce and his two sons, the one a chip of the old block, the other a bitter commentator on the family failings. They are brought before the governor for entering his province without a permit; but, by bragging and promises, the foxy old man succeeds both in escaping punishment and in effecting a marriage between his scapegrace son and the governor's daughter. The interest is not in the plot, which is trivial, but in the constant play on words and in the humour of the anything but venerable parent."

A work by an anonymous aboriginal Shakspeare is the Quiche drama entitled *Rabinal Achi*, which, whatever the account of its present form may be, plainly belongs to pre-Columbian days. Once more I quote from Dr. Brinton: "*Rabinal Achi* is a warrior who takes captive a distinguished foe Canek, and brings him before the ruler of Rabinal, King Hobtoh. The fate of the prisoner is immediate death and he knows it, but his audacity and bravery do not fail him. He boasts of his warlike exploits and taunts his captors, like an Iroquois in his death song, and his enemies listen with respect. He even threatens the king and has to be restrained from attacking him. As his end draws near he asks to drink from the royal cup and eat from the royal dish; it is granted. Again, he asks to be clothed in the royal robe; it is brought and put about him. Once more he makes a request and it is to kiss the virgin mouth of the daughter of the king, and dance a measure with her 'as the last sign of his death and his end.' Even this is conceded, and one might think that it was his uttermost petition. But no: he asks one year's grace wherein to bid adieu to his native mountains. The king hears this in silence and Canek disappears; but, returning in a moment, he scornfully inquires whether they supposed he had run away. He

then in a few strong words bids a last farewell to his bow, his shield, his war-club and battle-axe, and is slain by the warriors of the king."

Now, there is another story of Canek related by Brasseur, and taken from ancient Quiche tradition, that resembles the tale of Paris of Troy and the fair Helen. It may have formed the theme of a lost drama. "The king of Chichen, about to be married, had, as was customary, sent the chief nobles of his court to the abode of his father-in-law to bring home his bride. The procession returned to Chichen to the sound of musical instruments, amid dancing and all kinds of rejoicing, escorting the young princess with great pomp, seated in a litter surrounded by noble matrons charged to wait upon her. But the marriage was taking place against her liking, for she loved Canek, distinguished for his courage and fine appearance above all the nobles of Chichen, and who on his part had vowed inviolable affection. With her consent he had formed the project of carrying her off. He assembled his vassals and posted them beside a road through which the procession had to pass. It was night; the moment the convoy arrived, he fell upon it unexpectedly with his little troop, dispersing without difficulty the lords and dames and seizing the princess, with whom he fled to the sea-shore. There a little fleet was waiting for him, in which he embarked with the princess and his friends, making sail for the coast of Zinibacan, whence, by the adjoining rivers of Bacalar, he gained the interior of Peten." Here then is Canek in another form as the Young Lochinvar or Jock o' Hazeldean of ancient Guatemala.

Dr. Brinton's *Aboriginal Authors* is unfortunately so little known, and is such an admirable *résumé* of native literature, that I trust I may be pardoned for again quoting from it. He says: "From the solemn religious representations on the one hand, and the diverting masquerades on the other, arose the two forms of tragedy and comedy, both of which were widely popular among the American aborigines. The effete notion that they were either unimaginative or insusceptible to humour is, to be sure, still retained by a few writers who are either ignorant or prejudiced; but it has been refuted so often that I need not stop to attack it. In fact, so many tribes were of a gay and frolicsome disposition, so much given to joking, to playing on words, and to noticing an humorous aspect of occurrences, that they have not infrequently been charged by the whites best acquainted with them, the missionaries, with levity and a frivolous temperament. Among the many losses which American ethnology has suffered, that of the text of the native dramas is one of the most regrettable. It is, however, not total. Two have been published which claim to be, and I think are, faithful renditions of the ancient texts as they were transmitted verbally from one to another in pre-Columbian times." One of those mentioned by Dr. Brinton, the *Rabinal Achi*, has already been considered. "The most celebrated of these is the drama of *Ollanta* in the

Qquichua language of Peru. No less than eight editions of this have been published, the last and best of which is that by the meritorious scholar, Senor Gavino Pacheco Zegarra. The internal evidence of the antiquity of this drama has been pronounced conclusive by all competent Qquichua students." Mr. Clements R. Markham has published an English version of it, entitled "Ollanta, an Ancient Ynca Drama." Messrs. Rivero and Tchudi, in their Peruvian Antiquities, incline to the belief that it was composed in the latter half of the fifteenth century and represented in the plaza of Cuzco before the Incas.

Its full title is "Ollanta, or the Severity of a Father and the Generosity of a King." The hero of the piece is the humbly born, but celebrated Chief Ollanta, whose name is still preserved in a bridge, a fortress, and a palace, and whose deeds are to this day well known among the Indians of Peru. In his day Pachacutec was Inca, a king of invincible pride and austere justice, in other words, a Roman parent and pagan divinity. His beautiful daughter Cusi Coyllur returned the love of the brave and handsome young warrior. In spite of court etiquette and all precautions, they contrived to have many meetings, and, licenses, banis, and marriage ceremonies being next to unknown in Peru, they regarded themselves as man and wife. Ollanta, anxious that their union should receive sanction from the powers that be, waited upon Pachacutec and asked his majesty to consent to his position as a son-in-law. The irate monarch rejected the low-born warrior's suit with anger, scorn, and indignation, and drove him from the palace gates. He called for Cusi Coyllur, upbraided her for her base attachment, and threw her into prison. Not satisfied with this, soon as he heard that her child was born, he ordered this only solace to be taken from her. Enraged at these barbarities, Ollanta gathered a band of warriors and boldly attacked the empire. He took many fortified places, and was at the height of his fortune when the harsh Pachacutec died. This monarch was succeeded by his son and Cusi Coyllur's brother, the Inca Yupanqui, a benevolent and generous ruler, who is reported to have refused homage to the Sun because, in his daily round, he was simply the bond servant of a greater and free master. His character attached people to him, and chief among those devoted to his service was Rumiñahui, a general worthy to compare with Ollanta. Rumiñahui took the field, drove Ollanta's band from one refuge to another, and finally captured him. Everyone looked for the hardy rebel's death, but the magnanimous Yupanqui, putting himself in the prisoner's place, as Charles Reade would have said, freely pardoned him, and, to his great delight and endless gratitude, restored to his strong arms Cusi Coyllur and her child. Other characters who play a subordinate part are the Chief Priest of the Temple of the Sun, who discountenances Ollanta in his suit and rebellion, and one whom Dr. Brinton calls "a facetious youth who is constantly punning and joking," which, under the sad circumstances, was very wrong.

A tradition regarding the warfare between Rumiñahui and Ollanta is interesting, because it is one of the strange historical parallels always cropping up, that calls to mind Livy's story of the taking of Gabii by Sextus Tarquinius, and Herodotus' account of the capture of Babylon through Zopyrus. This tradition states that the nobleman Ollanta was degraded from his high rank for the crime of being surprised in the House of the Virgins of the Sun, a crime punishable with death. He took refuge in an almost inaccessible and very strong mountain fortress called Ollanta Tambo, the ruins of which still exist. The Inca Yupanqui and his general, being unable to storm the fortress, accepted the proposal of a devoted chief, who begged to be publicly punished in the sight of both armies, so as to afford a plausible pretext for his subsequent desertion to the rebels. His proposition was carried out, and he fled to Ollanta Tambo, where he was joyfully received, and soon found himself in the confidence of the besieged. On the anniversary of Ollanta's birthday, when the troops, confident of their security, gave themselves up to reveling, this treacherous chief who had been placed in charge of one of the gates, at the sight of a preconcerted signal, opened it to the royal forces, who put the drunken garrison to the sword and made Ollanta prisoner. Historians who think highly of the Inca Yupanqui's character, doubt the truth of this tradition; but certainly those who tell it are as ignorant of Livy and Herodotus, as are the Aymaras of Tiabuanaco of the coincidence with Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of the Giant's Dance brought from Ireland, of the story that their Stonehenge was set up in a single night by an invisible hand. If the ancients had only had the foresight to publish newspapers, even if they were written on clay tiles or sheets of papyrus, the Memphis Globe or the Babylon Gazette, the Nineveh Mail or the Jerusalem Witness might have told us where these stories had their origin.

My aim in these pages has been to show that our Indians, prior to the arrival of Europeans in the continent, were by no means all ignorant savages, but men and women in powers and in passions very like ourselves, and who cultivated their intellectual powers to portray their passions. Apart from the benign influences of Christianity and the comforts of our Old World civilization, the Indian may be said to have deteriorated rather than to have advanced, since the Conquest. Mexico and Central America, Colombia and Peru were once great centres of native culture and activity, as their ruins and minor works of art attest. That culture and activity in commercial and other pursuits the Conquest arrested, debasing, not only the common people so much for they were slaves enough before, but the higher and intelligent classes of aborigines, to the position of serfs and of feeble reluctant imitators of their conquerors. Save in some favoured quarters, the remnants of the old Indian races have lost all their fire and energy, have become listless, apathetic, unin-

teresting, so that only one person in a thousand suspects the existence of a period in the past when their intellects were as vigorous, their energies as active as our own. Only in Yucatan, strange to say, do they dream of independence and the restoration of the old state of things, including their original idolatry. Writing as late as 1890, George Squier thus alludes to his Maya guide, and prophesies dimly :

“When I left the outposts of civilization and plunged into the untracked wilderness, never did a suspicion of a doubt darken for an instant my confidence or impair my faith in the loyal heart of Antonio Chul—once the mild-eyed Indian boy, but now the dreaded chieftain and victorious leader of the unrelenting Itzaes of Yucatan. Time only can determine what will be the final result of the contest which is now waging upon the soil of that beautiful but already half desolated peninsula. Almost every arrival brings us the news of increased boldness and new successes on the part of the Indians ; and it now seems as if the drama of the conquest were to be closed by the destruction of the race of the conquerors. Terribly the frown darkens on the face of Nemesis ! The voice of the Tiger is loud in the mountains !” There is no danger of the Indian reasserting his independence in any part of Canada or the United States, but in Mexico, in Central, and in South America, they are numerically strong, they live beneath the shadow of their ancestral glories, they keep alive traditions of the happy days of old. Untamable Indian blood, under a smooth and dead-alive skin, is the cause of unrest in the Spanish and Portuguese republics of the south, and one shudders to think of the consequences should a southern Pontiac or Tecumseh summon the league of the nations and let loose the tiger gnawing at their hearts.

Our duty is plain to keep in remembrance all that is great in our Red brethren's past and honour them for it. In so doing we shall detract nothing from our own, and will greatly increase their self-respect. As they cannot expect to achieve independence for themselves, let them share freely in our independence so soon as the spirit of true manhood, crushed out by ages of poverty, oppression and injustice, revives within them. We want hundreds and thousands of Dr. Oronhyatekhas and Miss Pauline Johnsons to give added strength, a new flavour and piquancy, to our national life, so that Canada's may be all that is worthy and honourable in Indian character, all that is famous in their history and instructive in their traditions ; that our children's children may prize as part of their own the productions of the native mind since the conquest, and also the more ancient literature of America before Columbus which I have humbly striven to illustrate.





